

Hungarian Stamp 2005

WORLD THEATRE DAY



The Hungarian Post Office Ltd. is issuing a special stamp to mark World Theatre Day.

In June 1961 President Arvi Kivimaa of the Finnish Centre of the International Theatre Institute proposed that World Theatre Day be instituted. The initiative was backed by the Scandinavian centres.

On 27 March the following year the first World Theatre Day was held, coinciding with the opening of the "Theatre of Nations" season in Paris. Since then, every 27 March the countries of the world have celebrated the power of the theatre to bring nations and peoples together and deepen mutual understanding. For this occasion an outstanding actor, dramatist or director writes an "International Message" every year, which is translated into over 20 languages and read to audiences in theatres, and spread further by radio and television. The first such message was written by Jean Cocteau, and over the years he has been joined by many other illustrious names such as Arthur Miller, who died recently, Laurence Olivier, Peter Brook, Pablo Neruda, Maurice Bejart and Eugene Ionesco. In 2005 the internationally acclaimed French directress Ariane Mnouchkine's message will be read on this day.

Since 1962 World Theatre Day has been celebrated in a variety of ways in different countries with free performances, conferences, congresses and workshops, special television and radio broadcasts, balls, processions and award ceremonies.

In the stamp design the shadow of an actor accepting the applause of the audience can be seen. The design of the first day cover shows the masks symbolising the theatre, while the special postmark features another reference to the theatre, a tympanum.

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